

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY: AF/W:BDCURRAN

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R 191533Z APR 74

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 078187

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION NIAMEY, APRIL 17, FROM SECSTATE RPTD TO
YOU:

QUOTE C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 078187

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: PFOR, NG

SUBJECT: COUP DEVELOPMENTS

REF: STATE 076185

1. REPORTS COMING TO DEPARTMENT ARE UNCLEAR REGARDING
ROLE LIBYANS MAY HAVE PLAYED DURING COUP. PRESS DESPATCHES
STATE PRIME MINISTER JALUD ATTEMPTED VISIT NIAMEY APRIL 16,
BUT PLANE DENIED PERMISSION TO LAND. DEPARTMENT WOULD BE
INTERESTED EMBASSY ASSESSMENT POSSIBILITY OF LIBYAN OR
OTHER OUTSIDE INVOLVEMENT IN COUP.

2. AVAILABLE BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION WOULD INDICATE LT. COL.
SEYNI IS FAIRLY CONSERVATIVE AND HAS ENJOYED CLOSE TIES
WITH FRENCH MILITARY. ONE PRESS REPORT QUOTES HIM AS
IDENTIFYING WITH DE GAULLE. DEPARTMENT WOULD LIKE
ASSESSMENT OF LOCAL FRENCH REACTION TO COUP. DO FRENCH
HAVE ANY IDEAS AS TO MOTIVATION FOR COUP, LIKELY
ORIENTATION AND ANTICIPATED POLICY CHANGES OF NEW REGIME,
ABILITIES OF MILITARY LEADERSHIP?

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3. QUICK LOOK AT LIST OF NEW CABINET OFFICERS INDICATES

PREDOMINANCE DJERMAS AND OTHER NON-HAUSAS, ALSO MOST APPEAR TO BE OLDER MORE SENIOR MEN. DO HAUSAS AND YOUNGER OFFICERS FEEL THEY HAVE ACCEPTABLE LEVEL OF INFLUENCE IN NEW SET-UP?

4. WE NOTE STUDENTS HAVE BEEN QUICK TO JUMP ON MILITARY BAND WAGON, BUT WONDER IF THEIR ENTHUSIASM MAY BE SHORT-LIVED ASSUMING NEW REGIME REMAINS CAST IN FAIRLY CONSERVATIVE MOLD.

5. PRESS REPORTS FROM LAGOS CARRYING STATEMENT BY NIGERIAN AMBASSADOR TO NIAMEY (JUST ARRIVED IN LAGOS FROM NIGER CAPITAL) FLATLY ASSERTING MRS. DIORI WAS KILLED DURING ATTACK ON PALACE. DEPARTMENT WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR FURTHER COMMENT ABOUT PRESUMED DEMISE OF MRS. DIORI. ARE THERE CONFIRMATIONS OF OTHER CASUALTIES?

6. AMBASSADOR HECK WILL RETURN TO WASHINGTON SHORTLY FROM PARIS, TO AWAIT FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS IN NIGER.

7. PLEASE CONFIRM PROPER SPELLING NAME NEW CHIEF OF STATE. SHOULD HE BE REFERRED TO AS LT. COL. SEYNI? OR LT. COL. KOUNTCHE? KISSINGER

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